

WOMEN IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS  
CI/HUMINT COMMUNITY

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MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE  
General Studies

by

JACKSON L. REESE, MAJOR, USMC  
B.S., Texas A&M University, College Station, TX, 1995

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas  
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Name of Candidate: Major Jackson L. Reese

Thesis Title: WOMEN IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS CI/HUMINT  
COMMUNITY

Approved by:

\_\_\_\_\_, Thesis Committee Chair  
Yvonne Doll, D.M.

\_\_\_\_\_, Member  
John T. Kuehn, Ph.D.

\_\_\_\_\_, Member  
Russell H. Thaden, MMAS

Accepted this 13th day of June 2008 by:

\_\_\_\_\_, Director, Graduate Degree Programs  
Robert F. Baumann, Ph.D.

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## ABSTRACT

WOMEN IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS CI/HUMINT COMMUNITY  
by Major Jackson L. Reese, 60 pages

The purpose of the researchers Masters of Military Arts and Science thesis is to explore the possibility of including women in the Marine Corps CI/HUMINT community without diminishing the overall unit cohesion and combat effectiveness of combat arms units currently conducting counterinsurgency (COIN) operations in Iraq. The subject warrants further study and analysis as the United States Marine Corps currently excludes women from serving in the CI/HUMINT military occupational specialty (MOS).

Thesis research is aimed at assessing the possible impacts to combat units, typically line infantry battalions, overall combat effectiveness and unit cohesion should the be assigned a HUMINT Exploitation Team (HET) to conduct human intelligence collection operations and support COIN operations. A survey was conducted to incorporate the experiences of senior leaders, typically operations officers, executive officers and commanding officers, who have served in Iraq. This allowed the researcher to better understand the points of view of those who have combat experience and answer the proposed research question.

The United States Marine Corps elements that comprise Multi-National Forces-West (MNF-W) in Al Anbar Province, Iraq currently employs female marines from a variety of MOS's to interact with Iraq's female citizens. None of the female marines are trained to conduct CI/HUMINT operations. The thesis concludes that including women in the Marine Corps CI/HUMINT community would be an asset to combat leaders whose units are conducting COIN operations in Iraq.

Additional study is required to expand the researchers' preliminary findings. Research areas would include an assessment on the Marine Corps' intelligence community and the ability to implement a change in policy. Training and personnel management challenges would also need to be explored in greater detail. It is likely that cultural change would be a challenge for combat leaders and intelligence professionals alike should the inclusion of women in the United States Marine Corps CI/HUMINT community become a reality.

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## ACRONYMS

CI/HUMINT	Counter-intelligence/Human Intelligence
COE	Contemporary Operational Environment
COIN	Counterinsurgency
COP	Combat Outpost
DMDC	Defense Manpower Data Center
FOB	Forward Operating Base
GWOT	Global War on Terrorism
HET	HUMINT Exploitation Team
I MEF	I Marine Expeditionary Force
MCT	Marine Combat Training
METT-TC	Mission, Enemy, Terrain & Weather, Troops, Time Available, Civil Considerations
MNF-W	Multi-National Force West
MOS	Military Occupational Specialty
MPI	Manpower Performance Indicators
MSC	Major Subordinate Command

OCS	Officer Candidates School
ODSE	Marine Corps Operational Data Store Enterprise
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OIF	Operation Iraqi Freedom
PIR	Priority Intelligence Requirement
TBS	The Basic School
TCP	Traffic Control Point
TFDW	Marine Corps Total Force Data Warehouse
THT	Tactical HUMINT Team
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
USMC	United States Marine Corps
WEP	Woman Engagement Program



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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

“Poor judgment on the part of subordinates in the handling of situations involving the local civil authorities and the local inhabitants is certain to involve the commander of the force in unnecessary military difficulties and cause publicity adverse to the public interests of the United States.”

Small Wars Manual, FMRP 12-15, Section VI, 41

The role of human intelligence in counter-insurgency (COIN) operations is integral to mission accomplishment. Over the course of combat operations in Iraq, Marine Corps counter-intelligence and human intelligence (CI/HUMINT) specialists have made tremendous contributions to support conventional and counter-insurgency operations for nearly four years. As the enemy situation has evolved, human intelligence collection has grown more and more critical to stability operations, humanitarian assistance efforts, and the development of a competent Iraqi security apparatus in the Al Anbar Province.

An underdeveloped source of human intelligence (HUMINT) and local information is Iraqi women. While often found in close proximity of male citizens or recently detained individuals suspected of insurgent actions, Iraqi women are typically overlooked for questioning due to the many cultural concerns and sensitivities regarding how U.S. and coalition service members deal with Iraqi civilian women. Equally significant is the cultural misunderstanding or difficulty in establishing a positive rapport on behalf of male Marines with the Iraqi population.

While women have proudly served in the United States military throughout every major conflict in its short history, typically filling the roles of nurses, cooks, or even spying, their contributions were focused on specific wars and campaigns; not fulfilling

what would be considered professional soldier or marine missions. The transition into a recognized entity of the United States Armed Services began in the 1940s. President Truman signed the “Women’s Armed Services Integration Act” in 1948, allowing women to comprise two percent of the total U.S. military force (Bellafaire, 2007).

Perhaps the most notable and often debated excerpt from the Women’s Armed Services Act is the exclusion of women from combat units. Recent amendments to the act included the authorization of women to pilot combat aircraft (McSally 2007, 16). However, the role of women in the United States military increased exponentially during the action taken in the years following the Vietnam War with the formation of the all-volunteer force, the elimination of the Women’s Army Corps in the late 1970s, and during President Clinton’s administration.

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 1992-1993 saw Congress repeal female combat exclusion rules (McSally 2007, 17). In doing so, the National Defense Authorization Act served as a de-facto “toe hold” for female inclusion into the mainstream military. This afforded women the opportunity to fill a variety of military occupational specialties, many of which could be characterized as combat or combat-related jobs.

While still unable to fill the more traditional combat-specific roles of an infantryman, tank operator, or artilleryman, the 1993 Defense Authorization Act afforded women the ability to serve in attack aviation roles and other potentially dangerous occupations. Both the Army and the Marine Corps still exclude women from combat roles. This, however, does not eliminate the women in the U.S. armed services from being exposed to the many dangers found on today’s battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan.

The researcher is not proposing or choosing to champion the debate about opening combat specialties to U.S. military women. However, it is very important to point out that the current roles of women in the military, specifically the Army and Marine Corps, appear to have far eclipsed what is authorized by the various authorizations policies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

History illustrates the fact that women have successfully engaged in combat during major conflicts such as the Civil War, World War I, World War II, and the Korean and Vietnam Wars. Additionally, their contributions during aerial operations during the Gulf War and the current operations in support of the Global War on Terrorism are noteworthy. While women have performed their military roles with distinction, at times even noted for their bravery, they have never been directly assigned to front line formations.

There are several key concerns regarding the incorporation of women into the more traditional combat roles and responsibilities. Concerns such as esprit-de-corps, unit cohesion, and physical endurance are typically the three most discussed concerns about including women in front line combat or infantry units. Each is a valid concern and each concern will be discussed in greater detail in subsequent chapters of this thesis.

The focus of this thesis identified a possible gap in United States Marine Corps intelligence collection capability, and addressed the focused inclusion of women in a support role to fill a possible crucial human intelligence collection responsibility for front line combat or infantry units responsible for the conduct of counter-insurgency operations. The research problem determined if the exclusion of women from the United States Marine Corps Counter-intelligence/Human Intelligence (CI/HUMINT) community

negatively impacts human intelligence collection support to counter-insurgency operations and the overall Global War on Terrorism (GWOT).

The United States Marine Corps counter-intelligence/human intelligence communities currently exclude women from participation. The current emphasis on human intelligence collection to support the global war on terrorism and Operation Iraqi Freedom has identified a requirement for robust information collection to support counter-insurgency operations. Including women in the role of information collectors may gain Marine forces greater access to the local population and improve their desire to provide information regarding insurgent operations to U.S. forces.

There is much to be said for the innate ability of females, regardless of race or ethnic background, to understand or comfort one another in times of crisis and chaos. From a cultural perspective, the very presence of a male combat soldier or marine is incredibly intimidating to Iraqi women. As a result, Iraqi women are not inclined to discuss subjects potentially crucial to the counter-insurgency operations the U.S. military currently faces in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Recent I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) initiatives, such as the Lioness Program or the Women's Engagement Program (WEP), in Al Anbar Province, have attempted to address the cultural and emotional divide between male marines and Iraqi females. The very presence of female marines in Iraqi situations often has an immediate calming effect, and at times female marines provide a much needed reassurance for Iraqi women when the women encounter routine military operations on the streets and neighborhoods of places like Fallujah, Ramadi, and Rutbah.

Secondary questions essential to the overall discussion topic include the current roles and missions of women in the United States Marine Corps. Additional effort was made to identify the level with which Iraqi women have supported intelligence collection efforts since the establishment of counterinsurgency (COIN) operations in Al Anbar Province. A great deal of discussion revolves around the sociological aspects of women in the military and their exposure to combat operations. Similar analyses regarding Arab culture and several nuances concerning a woman's role in that society were examined. These tertiary-level questions and issues were found to involve established cultural paradigms and a possible reluctance to depart from accepted social norms regarding the role of women in the United States military.

Much has been written about the roles and functions of women in the military. Most of the military gender research has revolved around the general concept of women serving in combat environments in skill sets typically not proliferated by women, such as aviation and infantry. Initial internet searches have resulted in numerous historical examples of female service in the U.S. armed forces dating back to the World Wars. Of specific interest is the roles and functions of women in the military since the beginning of the Gulf War in 1990, culminating with recent COIN operations in Iraq.

The context of the research established a baseline for the historical roles of women in the U.S. armed services. Further refinement is necessary specific to United States Marine Corps roles, functions, and operational employment of female Marines. In doing so, the researcher developed a statistical relationship between the early contributions of women and the overall requirement of their service to Marine Corps mission requirements.

The study included interviews with United States Marine Corps intelligence professionals and combat-experienced leaders to specifically address the problem statement and possible solutions. Emphasis was made to involve leaders who can rely on their combat experience to identify possible requirements to better support the conduct of COIN operations in Iraq. Additionally, interaction with combat leaders highlighted leadership experiences, lessons-learned, and future challenges, and assisted in the determination of including women in the United States Marine Corps CI/HUMINT community if that concept becomes a reality.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

“Strict adherence to the core values, coupled with rigorous training and education, ensure a Marine Corps that is made up of men and women with intellectually agility, initiative, moral courage, strength of character, and a bias for action.”

MCDP 1-0 Marine Corps Operations, 2001, Ch 1, 23.

A great deal has been written about women serving in the U.S. armed forces of the United States; specifically, the ever increasing role women play in a combat environment. While still not authorized to serve in combat roles, the women of the United States military have been exposed to the dangers of combat since the onset of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF).

As the debate continues to evolve about the future of women in combat, the mere fact that they are currently “in harms way” is a testament to their ability to handle the mental and emotional aspects of war. While many women serve in a military support role capacity, numerous women also train, prepare, and lead combat convoy patrols to support their combat arms counterparts all over the battlefield. While opinions differ regarding women serving in actual combat units, the counter-insurgency battlefield of today quite possibly negates many of the arguments against women serving in combat units. Even when assigned to supporting units, women are nearly as “targetable” as their male counterparts simply based upon the asymmetric nature of insurgent warfare.

Unfortunately, literature and analysis regarding the role of women serving in counter-intelligence or human intelligence units is nearly non-existent. Therefore, the researched body of literature was organized by the following subordinate thesis topics:



the role of women in combat, the psychological impact of women in times of chaos, as well as women's influence on combat effectiveness and unit cohesion.

Upon further examination of the United States Marine Corps (USMC) statistics regarding women on active duty, the researcher discovered that females comprise 6.29% of the Marine Corps (USMC Demographics Update, 2007). See Figure 1 for a graphical depiction of women in the military by service component. This Marine Corps percentage compares to 13.75% females in the Army, 14.48% females in the Navy, and 19.65% females in the Air Force (USMC Demographics Update, 2007). The 6.23% Marine Corps statistic equates to roughly 11,700 women marines currently serving on active duty. Additionally, it is important to illustrate that an undetermined number of those 11,700 female marines have deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. These marines are serving in camps both large in size, as well as smaller Forward Operating Bases (FOB) in remote and austere locales. While many female marines are not technically assigned to a combat unit, such as an infantry battalion, artillery battalion, or tank battalion, they do provide critical combat service support to the day-to-day conduct of counter-insurgency operations, stability operations, as well as mission critical interaction with local Iraqi citizens.

## Gender/Ethnicity/Education

- The Marine Corps has the lowest percentage of female members of any of the military Services (Data source: DMDC – December 2007, TFDW – December 2007).

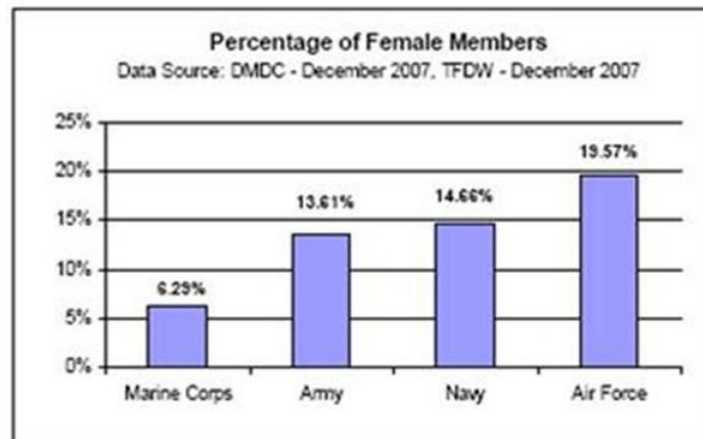


Figure 1. USMC Demographics 2007

Source: DMDC December 2007; TFDW December 2007 Marine Corps Demographics December 2007; Headquarters Marine Corps Personal and Family Readiness Division (MR), 2008.

The United States Army permits women to serve in their counter-intelligence units. Additionally, female Army soldiers are also involved in the interrogation processes. Discussions with officers assigned to the Army's Military Intelligence training school in Ft. Huachuca, Arizona, revealed an interesting approach toward employing women in Army Tactical HUMINT Teams (THT).

As a result of the gender mixed success with Army THTs, the researcher believes that the Marine Corps can draw valid conclusions from the lessons learned by a sister-

service regarding training techniques and service assignments for women counter-intelligence and human intelligence professionals. Incorporating previously established norms to train and integrate women into the active force sheds considerable light on how the United States Marine Corps could include women in their CI/HUMINT community. Based upon unit deployment requirements, female marine assignments to operational units or Intelligence Battalions would be vetted through Major Subordinate Command (MSC) with input so that marine units without women are manned with women marines based on mission requirements.

In an essay included in the book, “One of the Guys”, edited by Tara McKelvey, the author of the chapter entitled Women and the Profession of Arms indicated that it is merely a military necessity to ensure that women play an ever increasing role in our armed forces (Solaro 2007, 97). Many of the military occupational specialties (MOS) from which women are currently excluded are in the greatest need for their services. This so called “high demand, low density” issue is not uncommon to each of the services. However, in key aspects of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), intelligence professionals are critical to success. Typically referred to as a “short” MOS, meaning that there are not enough Marine Corps intelligence specialists for the operational need, the intelligence community, CI/HUMINT specifically, may stand to gain the most if the role of women is increased in specialties that women are currently excluded from performing.

A somewhat similar view is held by Franklin Pinch, author of “Challenge and Change in the Military: Gender and Diversity Issues”. While focusing much of his writing on the employment of women in combat-related specialties in the Canadian

Armed Forces, Pinch identified a fundamental point focused on national legislation. He specifically stated that both national legislation, along with enlightened, intimately involved senior military and political leadership are needed for overall diversity management to achieve success (Pinch 2004, 24). This is likely the base-line starting point for the argument, should one be made, to allow combat-related military occupational specialties to become more inclusive to women.

It is also important to point out that many countries, that are a bit more progressive regarding women in their combat units, are less likely to be involved in large-scale combat operations. Countries such as Canada, New Zealand, and Australia are good examples of integrating women into their combat units. While certainly active participants in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) or other United Nations (UN) affiliated operations, the military organizations in Canada, New Zealand, and Australia are not employed, or deployed for that matter, on the scale of the United States or Great Britain. However, each of the above mentioned countries also share commonalities with the United States regarding the overall concept of gender integration in their societies (Pinch 2004, 16).

Interestingly enough, the nesting of human resource initiatives and their overall impact on unit cohesiveness is also discussed in the book, “Challenge and Change in the Military: Gender and Diversity Issues”. As highlighted by Pinch, an appropriate amount of education and associated human resource policies will be necessary to overcome perceptions of decreased team cohesion or operational effectiveness (Pinch 2004, 9). The topic of unit cohesion will be discussed later in this chapter.

While most writings continually focus on the overall utilization of women in combat roles, such as infantry, tanks, or artillery, the researcher was able to identify key thought processes applicable to the intelligence profession. As stated in the book “A Few (More) Good Men (and Women)”, women are likely the single group most responsible for the success of the all-volunteer force as they routinely display greater intellect on entrance exams and serve with decreased discipline issues when compared to their male counterparts (Gold 2007, 91). The U.S. armed services have all benefited from the professional contributions of women. Additionally, the Army and the Marine Corps constantly puts female soldiers and marines in harms way while deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan using the “temporarily attached”, not “assigned” tag.

The way women are trained in the Army and the Marine Corps allows for their adaptation to combat units, regardless of the verbiage used to describe their affiliation with the unit they are serving. In doing so, the ingrained instincts discussed, trained, and tested during recruit training are what take over during times of crisis (Holmstedt 2007, 72-73) and serve as testimony of the character of service of the marines and soldiers during combat operations. The training, dedication, and commitment to service of military women have made a difference and assist in bridging the gap of the gender divide. We have all heard the credo, “Every Marine a Rifleman” and it certainly holds true in combat.

Discussed in greater context by Sara Sheldon in “The Few. The Proud. Women Marines in Harm’s Way” is the importance the current war in Iraq has had on the American public understanding of women in combat. The author is quick to point out that many Americans might not be all that familiar with the current roles and

responsibilities of women in uniform, to include the restrictions placed on them in a combat environment. Individual female marines interviewed illustrated that the current circumstances in Iraq have made it a little easier for people to accept women in combat scenarios (Sheldon 2008, 78). Women marines are involved in nearly every aspect of combat operations whether it is assisting in civil-military operations to improve local economics or delivering food and ammunition to front line combat units.

Regardless of their specialties, the women serving in Iraq appear to be eager to do whatever is asked of them by their male counterparts (Sheldon 2008, 78). While not entirely of a gung-ho approach, the author does point out that not all women can handle the stresses of combat situations, much in the same manner as that not all males are cut out for military service. However, solid training, dedication, and self-discipline go quite a long way toward ensuring female marines are ready to endure the mental and physical challenges of combat (Sheldon 2008, 85).

In her book, “Women in the Line of Fire”, Erin Solaro explored the issue of social cohesion and its possible contributions to mission or unit cohesion. In combat units, unit cohesion may be synonymous with male bonding, which one could further infer to equate to the denigration of women (Solaro 2006, 297). This linkage may be one reason why decision-making authorities are concerned with the presence of women, both attached and assigned, negatively impacting the cohesion of a combat unit. However, as Solaro routinely pointed out, the emotional bonding between soldiers in a unit and the entire concept of unit cohesion equates to combat effectiveness (Solaro 2006, 20).

The employment of women in combat roles has evolved greatly since the Vietnam War. Now, more than five years into combat operations in Iraq, women are fully

integrated in nearly all aspects of counter-insurgency operations. With their integrated involvement in Iraq, it is nearly impossible to ban women from combat roles. As Solaro illustrated, there are no front lines in counter-insurgency operations. The asymmetric threats posed by insurgents are not discriminating when it comes to combat units, supporting infrastructure, or critical logistics convoys (Solaro 2006, 14). Women, regardless of their military occupational specialty, face practically the same dangers and psychological impacts when operating outside the relatively safe confines of the forward operating bases or combat outposts that their male counterparts face.

When discussing the psychological impacts of women in a combat environment, it is important to point out local Iraqi perceptions. Many Iraqi's see the presence of women as a sign of respect for their cultural and religious beliefs. Perhaps the most important cultural norm is the notion that female military soldiers are the only U.S. service members allowed to search or otherwise handle female Iraqi citizens (Solaro 2006, 85). This is a significant step forward in cultural understanding and realization of the positive impact female soldiers and marines can have on the counter-insurgency battlefield in which the U.S. is currently operating in Iraq.

The psychological focal point is not limited to the perception of non-combatants in Iraq. In her book, "Band of Sisters", Kirsten Holmstedt highlighted the point that Marine Corps infantrymen, often chose to discuss personal issues or problems with their female counterparts. Numerous theories could be developed as to why some male marines confided in their female counterparts, but it is likely due to a strong bond amongst a unit and solid unit cohesion that created an environment for individuals from differing specialty backgrounds to confide in each other for support, counseling, or

reassurance. This is not to say that women are a de-facto support mechanism for combat stressed soldiers and marines. On the contrary, it is a sign of respect and trust shared amongst peers and an attempt to cope with the stresses of combat operations.

The combat instincts ingrained through rigorous enlistment training, such as boot camp or Marine Combat Training (MCT), is what takes over in a time of crisis. These skills and trained responses are not exclusive of women (Holmstedt 2007, 22-23). When put to the test on a combat patrol in the Haditha region of Iraq, female marines attached to the infantry battalion operating in the area performed in a noteworthy fashion largely due to their training and their ability to bond with their supported male counterparts (Holmstedt 2007, 2). The bottom line is that the women marines made a difference when a chaotic situation developed. These actions further illustrate that, regardless of their role with the supported unit, women can be integrated into the overall mission and perform like their fellow male marines.

In today's Contemporary Operating Environment (COE), the line between combat and non-combat specialties is quite blurred. The United States Marine Corps refers to the occupations of infantry, artillery, and tanks as "combat arms", while practically all other specialties are referred to as "combat service support" occupations. What is important is that the current Marine Corps Commandant, General James T. Conway, has developed a new policy aimed at ensuring that each and every marine supports the current Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). The "Every Marine into the Fight" effort strongly encourages each individual marine to deploy in support of GWOT requirements (MARADMIN 002/07). In doing so, individuals learn and gain a greater appreciation for what the Marine Corps is attempting to accomplish in support of United States strategic interests



in the Middle East. Over time, it is anticipated that those individuals who do not deploy in support of GWOT requirements may face negative repercussions on a promotion board when compared to their counterparts who may have made one or numerous OIF/OEF deployments.

A noted theme throughout much of the literature is that the current nature of warfare, at least warfare associated with the Global War on Terrorism, exposes nearly all participants to similar enemy threats. There is little difference among those serving in traditional combat roles with that of those typically associated with supporting and sustainment roles. The very nature of the current asymmetric threat affords equal opportunity of danger and or potential injury or loss of life to any soldier or marine operating outside the comfort of their base. As a result, many of the authors believed that it is now time for women to become more involved in the mainstream military.

While much would need to be done at the strategic level of decision making for our armed services, the very fact that women currently operate in direct support of combat units under the auspices of “attachment” vice “assignment” might aid those attempting to review current policies regarding women serving in traditional combat roles. It is becoming a bit more clear now that the role of women in the United States military appears to have out-paced what is currently actually allowed by law.

Physical differences between male and female marines are a noteworthy topic, but perhaps greater to the overall issue regarding women in combat specialties is a woman’s potential negative impact on unit cohesion, combat effectiveness, and mission accomplishment. Subordinate to this concept are possible disciplinary issues that may

occur by having women in combat units, including sexual harassment or assault, that all-male combat units typically are not exposed to on a regular basis.

The vast majority of literature has been focused on the basic concept of women serving in combat roles in the U.S. military. Very little has been written on the exclusion of women marines in the CI/HUMINT community, especially during the current GWOT or COIN environment we face today. Even so, key areas were explored relating to the topic. While the Marine Corps intelligence community is not associated or referred to as a “combat arms” specialty, those intelligence professionals assigned or attached to support combat units and their operations are no less exposed to tactical level threats in an attempt to support the commander’s accomplishment of his assigned mission than the marines assigned to that unit. Critical to the analytical approach of attempting to determine whether an increased role of women in the Marine Corps CI/HUMINT community will be the woman marines assessed impact on unit cohesiveness and overall combat effectiveness.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

“Small wars demand the highest type of leadership directed by intelligence, resourcefulness, and ingenuity.”

Small Wars Manual, FMRP 12-15, Section I, 9

The purpose of this chapter was to discuss the methods utilized to conduct an analysis of the researchers’ survey of individuals within the Marine Corps combat arms community or the survey responses of a human intelligence exploitation team (HET). Additionally, as mentioned in previous chapters, the research methodology will delineate any specific differences between the Marine Corps and the Army as it pertains to incorporating women into each of the two services counter-intelligence and human intelligence specialties. Crucial to this effort was a significant focus on several subordinate thesis questions: 1) what are the psychological impacts of women serving in the CI/HUMINT community? 2) would the Marine Corps need to significantly alter its current CI/HUMINT training program? and 3) would combat units or combat leaders see any possible benefits to employing female marines in support of their human intelligence collection efforts?

While attempting to maintain a focus on the above subordinate questions, the researcher continually maintained keen interest on the overall impact to unit cohesion and operational effectiveness. Answering subordinate thesis questions is not in and of itself difficult. However, maintaining focus on operational effectiveness and unit cohesion is a bit more challenging. As each of these topics or categories are subjective in nature, the researcher chose to conduct a simple survey that would solicit input from combat experienced marine officers that could provide valuable input based upon their individual

thoughts and experiences from operating in a counter-insurgency environment. Not exactly a highly-scientific process, the survey essentially asked two questions: 1) how would women serving in a HET supporting your combat operations affect your units' cohesion, and 2) how would women serving in a HET supporting your combat operations affect your units' combat effectiveness.

The research methodology afforded the six marines involved in the survey to answer the aforementioned questions with a basic “negatively, minimally, or positively” response. These marines were selected based upon their previous combat experience as battalion operations officers, executive officers, or commanding officers. Additionally, there was also an opportunity for the participants to expand upon their answers or share further thoughts on the topic as a marine combat leader and consumer of human intelligence. In doing so, many of the participants were able to describe second and third order effects of including women in a HET, and then employing them in a combat environment.

A more detailed review of these two critical discussion questions helps shed additional light on the analytical nature of the research. The term combat effectiveness is easier to define than unit cohesion. As articulated in FM 1-02 Operational Terms and Graphics, combat effectiveness is defined as the ability of a unit to perform its mission. Factors such as ammunition, personnel, status of fuel, and weapons systems are assessed and rated (FM 1-02, 2004, 1-35). The key subsets of combat effectiveness mentioned in the definition are fairly easy to define and assess as they rely on statistical reporting or quantifiable data to arrive at a conclusion. Typically, terms such as fully combat effective, marginally combat effective, or not combat effective were used to translate the

statistical data and reports into useable verbiage for a unit commander to arrive at an overall assessment of his or her units ability to conduct combat operations.

Somewhat more difficult was the ability to quantify or otherwise codify the perceived impact of individual marines on a unit's ability to fight. This required a more qualitative approach reliant upon leadership assessments of unit performance based on the overall performance of its members. The concept of unit cohesion plays a large role in the overall effectiveness of a unit. What makes for good unit cohesion? That is a difficult question to answer and one that requires substantial thought to attempt to cover many of the issues that can affect the cohesiveness of a team.

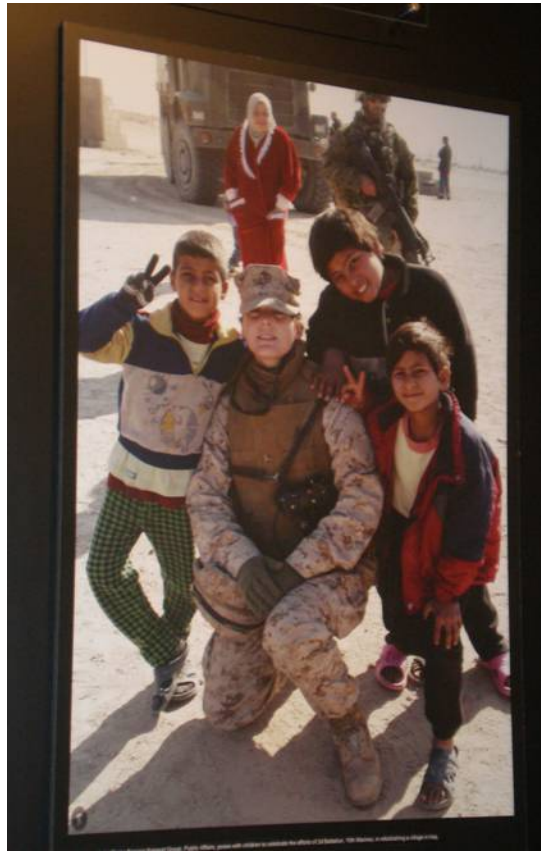


Figure 2. Female Marine

*Source:* Created by author. Female marine interacting with Iraqi children in Al Anbar Province, Iraq. Photograph taken by researcher while touring the National Museum of the Marine Corps, Quantico, VA, 2008.

There is no doctrinal definition of unit cohesion listed in FM 1-02, Operational Terms and Graphics. However, a quick review of the Merriam-Webster Dictionary provided the following definition of the word cohesion: “the act or state of sticking together tightly; especially unity”. As evidenced by the dictionary-specific definition, the term or phrase unit cohesion simply implies the tight-knit or solidified nature of a team that works closely together to accomplish an assigned task or mission. As a result of no doctrinal-based definition of unit cohesion, there are many different ways to assess

positive or negative impacts to the cohesiveness of a military unit. In an effort to cull a variety of thoughts on the subject, the researcher specifically approached those individuals in leadership roles, typically as a marine Operations Officer or Executive Officer, to best understand and articulate how a CI/HUMINT team comprised of one or more women might affect unit cohesion.

The rationale for interviewing those in key leadership positions is that they are best positioned to fully understand all facets of unit effectiveness and the requirement to train and fight as a functional team. Operations Officers and Executive Officers are routinely involved in all facets of unit training and personnel management. In addition, these positions are traditionally filled by officers who have previously served as Company Commanders and Platoon Commanders and can base their thoughts and opinions on their total body of leadership experience. This affords them the opportunity to present assessments rooted in experience and from a vantage point along the lines of a “lessons learned” or “after-action” review.

Not to be forgotten in the overall review of the possibility of including women in the Marine Corps CI/HUMINT community would be the way females currently support counter-insurgency operations in Al Anbar Province, Iraq. Currently, Multi-national Forces West (MNF-W) utilizes women to support Traffic Control Point (TCP) operations and other security-specific measures throughout the province. This thoughtful procedure allows for cultural sensitivities with Iraqi women and demonstrates understanding and respect for the Muslim faith.



Figure 3. Female Recruiting Poster

*Source:* Created by author. Vintage female marine recruiting poster. Photograph taken by researcher while touring the National Museum of the Marine Corps, Quantico, VA, 2008.

The Lioness Program, as it is commonly referred to in Iraq, provides entry-level training for women marines that allows them to operate Iraqi check points and conduct personnel searches of Iraqi women. The advantage of the Lioness Program ensures that no American male is required to touch or otherwise possibly “violate” the sanctity of Islamic women as required or respected by Islam. The Lioness Program has been a work in progress for the many years it has been implemented, but it remains unclear if the Lioness Program is the long-term solution for U.S. forces providing security throughout Iraq. Personnel inspections are a necessary requirement to prevent or deter suicide



bomber attacks and weapons or contraband smuggling throughout the country. Without U.S. women marines searching Iraqi women the incidents of suicide bombers and weapons smuggling would surely increase and possibly inflict greater harm to U.S. military members in Iraq.

Included in the researchers' survey is a specific question addressing recipients experience in dealing with the Lioness Program (Appendix A). This question is asked to offer additional context to survey respondents with the intent to analyze survey answers that may include exposure to a current technique marines are employing in Iraq. Additionally, it is certainly in the realm of the possible that the current program may be sufficient and thus render the idea of including women in the Marine Corps CI/HUMINT community as unnecessary.

The analytical conclusions derived in Chapter 4 form the foundation of the researchers' recommendations in the final chapter of this thesis. While there is plenty of room to debate the overall impact on unit combat effectiveness and cohesion, the opinions of those that would be entrusted to implement such a transition should carry considerable weight when determining possible future courses of action regarding the inclusion of women in the Marine Corps CI/HUMINT community.

## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS

“Small wars generally being the execution of the responsibilities of the President in protecting American interests, life and property abroad, are therefore conducted in a manner different from major warfare. In small wars, diplomacy has not ceased to function and the State Department exercises a constant and controlling influence over the military operations.”

Small Wars Manual, FMRP 12-15, Section I, 4

This chapter analyzed the survey data gathered throughout the course of research. The primary objective was to determine the desires of typical combat arms professionals, who would be entrusted to implement a policy that allows for the inclusion of women in the Marine Corps CI/HUMINT community. In addition, the researcher attempted to determine the desires of a few selected officers currently serving in the Marine Corps CI/HUMINT community, as well as the Marine Corps intelligence community as they are the key personnel impacted by the inclusion of women in the Marine Corps CI/HUMINT profession.

As discussed in previous chapters, the topic of combat effectiveness is a somewhat tangible, quantitative subject that can be easily assessed by key leaders or those responsible for managing specific weapon systems or crucial components of a unit that are required for mission accomplishment. Many military officials use combat effectiveness as a way to portray a “snapshot in time” status of a particular unit or subordinate section of a unit.

Of particular note is that the concept of combat effectiveness may be a bit more significant, as it determines a unit's ability to accomplish assigned missions, than unit cohesion. Throughout the conduct of research for this thesis project, the researcher found

numerous opinions, notions, or specific mentioning about combat effectiveness. Definition of this term becomes even more important when the topic of discussion or debate is one that encompasses the inclusion of women into a field dominated by men. The researcher surmises that this is especially true should the debate be about including women in the Marine Corps infantry units or any traditional combat arms unit. As evidenced by the research conducted by Major Rogers, Republic of New Zealand Infantry Regiment, in his Masters of Military Arts and Science (MMAS) thesis from 2001. He placed a great deal of emphasis on what he termed “operational effectiveness”. While his definition of the term operational effectiveness is slightly different than combat effectiveness, the definitions are nearly identical (Rodgers 2001, 41) and could be used interchangeably.

### Combat Effectiveness

What is combat effectiveness? Why is it important? The basic, overarching definition the researcher utilized while conducting the interviews and surveys was a units ability to perform its assigned mission. This may seem a somewhat broad definition, but it is the simplest, most qualitative way units can articulate and assess their ability to conduct operations and accomplish assigned missions.

It is important to point out that assessing a units’ combat effectiveness is less an analytical process and more of a factual-based, tangible process. Equipment is either fully mission capable, partially mission capable, or not mission capable. Individual personnel have completed their required training, either as a small unit or as an individual, and are “certified” to conduct specific operations. What is less clear is how to assess the impact an individual may have on a units’ combat effectiveness.

In a four man fire-team or 12 man squad, individuals may be able to positively affect a small units performance more so than when the individual is part of a larger team such as a platoon or company. The likelihood of an individual marine negatively impacting a battalion-sized unit is even less realistic. That possibility is normally reserved for key leaders who have the ability to directly influence, shape, or otherwise manipulate the training, performance, and morale of a unit. In conversations, both telephonically and electronically, the researcher had with Marine Corps leaders, it became more and more apparent that including women in the CI/HUMINT community would not negatively impact combat arms units a HET would support during the conduct of combat operations.

In response to the question “How might you assess the overall impact to unit cohesion if your unit was assigned a HET comprised of one or more females? Negatively, minimally or positively?” (Appendix B), leaders answered with “minimally” or “no impact”. These responses were based on experiences serving with HET support during COIN operations in Najaf, as well as Al Anbar Province.

In response to the same question, but substituting the term combat effectiveness for unit cohesion, the respondents replied with “positively” or “no impact”. Additionally, added comments described the inclusion to be a combat multiplier only limited by the maturity level of the HET marines themselves.

The “customer”, that being any combat arms unit assigned a HET for the conduct of combat operations, appeared to be very much open to the idea of females being included in a HET composition. Precedent does exist in just one example; women were attached, not assigned, to an infantry unit operating in the Haditha area and were utilized

to search Iraqi women and children with great success (Holmstedt 2007, 2). There may be several reasons for such a point of view, but the researcher poses a few key points of rationale: 1) mission accomplishment, 2) situational understanding of the COIN operating environment, and 3) previous combat experience.

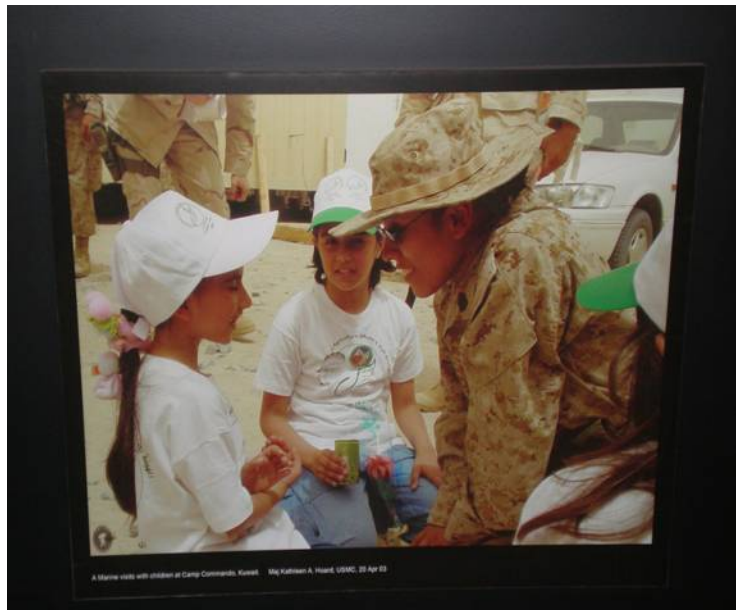


Figure 4. Interacting with Iraqi's

*Source:* Created by author. Female marine interacts with Iraqi children in Al Anbar Province, Iraq.. Photograph taken by researcher while touring the National Museum of the Marine Corps, Quantico, VA, 2008.

At nearly every level, Marine Corps leaders understand the importance of mission accomplishment. The current COIN environment in Iraq has proven to be quite complicated and mission accomplishment is no longer as clear as finding, closing with, and destroying the enemy. Combat units are now required to assist in economic development projects, law enforcement training, and governmental and judicial

processes. As if those tasks are not complicated enough in a safe and secure environment, combat units are now trying to collect intelligence to assist their efforts in capturing or killing insurgent forces operating in their assigned areas of responsibility.

The burden of mission accomplishment appears to open up the minds of key leaders and operational planners to new and or improved ways in which they conduct COIN operations. Including women in human intelligence collection efforts appears to be just another way in which combat units can gain greater insight into the local populace by adding a possible axis of advance to female civilians that previously were difficult to reach.

Situational understanding is a phrase used to articulate a commander's true knowledge of an area in which he leads operations. This is a more in depth knowledge-set than situational awareness because true situational understanding entails the product of applying analysis and judgment to the common operational picture to determine the relationship among the factors of Mission, Enemy, Terrain & Weather, Troops, Time Available, and Civil Considerations (METT-TC) (FM 1-02 2004, 2-19). Units deployed in the global war on terrorism have minimal time and troops available to accomplish their assigned missions. As alluded to in the METT-TC acronym, time and troops are two of the key elements of a commander's ability to achieve situational understanding and take proactive measures to affect positive change in his assigned area of responsibility. This further encourages decision makers to think creatively and employ any and all assigned resources to maintain combat effectiveness and achieve mission accomplishment.

Another important aspect embedded in situational understanding is the ability to know, respect, and operate within the nuances of local cultures and customs. Leaders

who operate with true situational understanding will always attempt to find ways to reinforce their success within the construct of local cultures, customs, and courtesies. Combat leaders appear to have identified the possible increased access to the civilian female population if they are able to incorporate women into their human intelligence collection efforts. This may provide them the opportunity to better exploit real-time or time-sensitive information that may not typically immediately present itself to an all male human collection team questioning civilians, females included, at the point of detention.

With all the difficult tasks facing combat units in the war on terrorism, the desire to achieve mission accomplishment has taken on new meaning. Quite different than Operation Desert Storm or Operation Desert Shield, the stability operations now being conducted by our combat units involve highly complex issues. Previous combat experience plays a large role on a units training for subsequent combat deployments. Combat units learn new techniques to more effectively conduct COIN operations, as well as the ability to adapt to changing enemy tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP). Additionally, key leadership is constantly challenged to formulate plans to develop more effective counter-insurgency operations based upon previous lessons-learned.

No longer is it simply enough to find, locate, and capture or kill enemy combatants or insurgents. Now combat units are tasked with repairing or building essential community services, developing democratic-like governances at the local and provincial level, and supporting economic development initiatives. All of these stability tasks are quite difficult in and amongst themselves, let alone while attempting to kill or capture enemy combatants or insurgents. Combat experiences allow commanders to

operate with a shorter decision-making cycle due to their successes and failures from previous COIN operations.

Discussions with six combat leaders identified support for including women in Marine Corps CI/HUMINT teams. The fact that anything that could possibly help a unit or commander accomplish the variety of difficult tasks to which they have been assigned, is a welcome addition. While provided the option to best characterize the impact of a female-inclusion Human Exploitation Team (HET) terms like “combat multiplier” and “value added” were directly linked to the application of females directly working in the current human intelligence collection effort. There were a few additional issues associated with the evaluation of women marines’ impact on combat effectiveness. These issues, such as individual maturity level and other types of personality traits will be explored in greater detail when analyzing the impacts on unit cohesion.





Figure 5. Female Marines

*Source:* Created by author. Female marines preparing for combat operations in Al Anbar Province, Iraq. Photograph taken by researcher while touring the National Museum of the Marine Corps, Quantico, VA, 2008.

### Unit Cohesion

The 1992 Presidential Commission, who reviewed the possibility of women serving in land combat, determined cohesion is the relationship that develops in a unit where members share common goals, values, and experiences. Additionally, members of said unit conform to group norms and behavior to ensure group or unit survival while maintaining all standards of performance (Center for Military Readiness 2004, 1-11). Embedded in this explanation is that members of a unit become completely dependent upon one another to accomplish an assigned mission. Individuals are expected to train,

prepare, and perform in such a way as to benefit the entire unit without preferential treatment or minimized performance standards.

The concept of unit cohesion is a more difficult topic to assess as it is not nearly as quantifiable as combat effectiveness. Those combat leaders surveyed understood the benefits of incorporating a female perspective to human intelligence collection efforts, but they remained cognizant of the possible negative impacts to unit cohesiveness as a result of introducing something new, specifically women into a traditionally all-male community. Marines, regardless of gender, are currently indoctrinated into active service through recruit training in an attempt to produce competent, resourceful, and effective warriors: “every Marine a rifleman.” While it may be argued that there is an air of cohesiveness amongst recruit training squads and platoons, it is more likely that true unit cohesion does not begin to take form until marines graduate recruit training, attend their Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) training, and are assigned to their permanent unit.

It is at the point where individual marines become part of a unit, in this instance, a combat unit, where mission-dependent cohesion becomes most important. The rationale for this is that all units in a capable fighting force must operate cohesively. Cohesion could be negatively affected by individual elements that may require specialized treatment or whom do not share a common level of experience (Center for Military Readiness 2004, 1-11). This is the precise point where combat leaders express concern regarding the inclusion of women in their efforts to conduct counter-insurgency operations. Survey respondents fully grasp and understand the potential of female

supported human intelligence collection should such an inclusionary policy be implemented.

However, many marine officers point out the need to ensure no specific accommodations or other factors of employment are emplaced, as that would definitely undermine unit cohesion. Combat units typically undergo extensive, physically and mentally demanding training to prepare for combat operations. Successful combat units have high morale, typically a testament to quality leadership, training, and cohesiveness of its members. Should special measures be implemented to accommodate female participation in a CI/HUMINT team, that decision is likely to have a negative impact on unit morale and all of its subordinate components to include unit cohesion.

Common ground appears to exist as the surveyed combat leaders readily identified that the likelihood of a female presence will generate an increase in human intelligence reporting or provide additional information from “point of capture” tactical interrogations and routing questioning of female innocents. In fact, Iraqi’s often viewed the presence of female servicemen as a sign of respect for their culture and way of life (Solaro 2006, 85). Another example of the type of affect females had on the local population is how Iraqi women and children were often fearful and scared in the midst of male marines. The fright and screaming subsided once they were in the presence of female marines (Holmstedt 2007, 10).

While open to the idea of women supporting combat units and their human intelligence collection requirements, the marines surveyed who were entrusted to lead others in a combat environment were somewhat concerned with the possibility of women negatively impacting the cohesiveness of their unit. Simply put is notion that the term

cohesion typically equates to male bonding, which often incorporates the denigration of women (Solaro 2006, 297). The leadership challenge then becomes one of figuring out how to incorporate a “combat multiplier” in such a way as not to disrupt the morale and cohesiveness of a combat unit operating in an environment which requires every member to eat, sleep, and breathe the concept of unit before self.

Some previous research into the idea of women serving in combat reported that infantrymen often felt comfortable talking to their female counterparts about personal problems (Holmstedt 2007, 17). The age-old notion that women are good listeners is likely the genesis of this school of thought. In fact, the stresses of operating in a combat environment certainly require an “outlet” for individuals to relieve stress, whether that be through discussion or exercise. While this outlet for stress may be a second or third order effect of having women present in a combat unit, their main purpose is to support combat operations. Several examples were noted by the participants of a group of women supporting Marine Corps counter-insurgency operations in the Haditha Triad, just northwest of Ramadi. While attached to an infantry unit that was responsible for operations in that particular area of Al Anbar Province, this group of women was patrolling with an infantry squad that came under attack from local insurgents. Their instincts, which were attributed to their “every Marine a rifleman” training, took over and the women were able to make a difference in the midst of a firefight (Holmstedt 2007, 22-23).

That is a small example of what combat unit commanders would expect from anyone serving in their unit. Additionally, it is what their peers would expect. Combat leaders still remain cautious about possible fraternization concerns. Attempts such as

living segregation between officers and enlisted marines exist to deter or diminish the likelihood of fraternization. Exceptions are made for instances where operational necessity dictates shared billeting conditions, but leaders in charge are likely to take additional measures to ensure fraternization or improper sexual relationships do not exist in units supported by CI/HUMINT teams augmented by women.



Figure 6. Iraqi Photography

*Source:* Created by author. Female marine demonstrates how to use a digital camera. Photograph taken by researcher while touring the National Museum of the Marine Corps, Quantico, VA, 2008.

In summation, the “customers” of Marine Corps CI/HUMINT are supportive of the benefits possible from HET elements comprised of one or more females. Military necessity and overall operational requirements of units supporting counter-insurgency operations in Iraq all but ensure that women are increasingly operating alongside men (Solaro 2007, 97). The experiences of leaders who have served in combat environments indicates a continuing thought process that women can serve as combat multipliers, capable of making a difference in their area of responsibility. However, concerns about the possible negative effects on unit cohesion are of more concern than the issue of combat effectiveness. The psychological impact of women in a combat environment are of documented, but through similar training at Marine Corps Recruit Depots, enlisted marines share a commonality of basic training that may be expanded through quality leadership and professionalism of all members of a combat unit under the auspices of mission accomplishment.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

“The term “Small War” is often a vague name for any one of a great variety of military operations. As applied to the United States, small wars are operations undertaken under executive authority, wherein military force is combined with diplomatic pressure in the internal or external affairs of another state whose government is unstable, inadequate, or unsatisfactory for the preservation of life and of such interests as are determined by the foreign policy of our Nation.”

Small Wars Manual, FMRP 12-15, Section I, 1

The discussion on whether or not women should be included in the United States Marine Corps Counter-intelligence/Human Intelligence (CI/HUMINT) community will likely not come to conclusion in the near future. The researcher chose to focus on the attitudes of combat leaders and units for Human Exploitation Team (HET) support comprised of one or more females to determine a possible need or acceptance of combat units that will be the recipients of the aforementioned capability. The overall body of research suggests a conclusion that the inclusion of women into the Marine Corps CI/HUMINT community will greatly support combat unit efforts to prosecute counter-insurgency (COIN) operations in their designated areas of responsibility.

#### Conclusions

A basic point of view regarding the inclusion of women in the Marine Corps CI/HUMINT community could be that of a risk versus reward. The research indicated that there was a willingness to employ HET capabilities, which include one or more women in the team, amongst combat leaders. While there may be some risk associated with this option, such as possible negative impact on combat effectiveness or unit cohesion, the reward is substantial. Many factors are at play, most of which are related to

current military organizational culture issues regarding the roles of women in combat. As pointed out in earlier chapters, the current battlefield in Iraq is one that does not discriminate among combat and support marines. Insurgents continue to target large formations, such as a FOB and small formations, perhaps more vulnerable targets such as logistics convoys or patrols. Any of these formations may be comprised of female marines working in a supporting establishment, that is, non-combat specialty. To date, female marines have performed quite well in the combat environments of Iraq. The real hurdle for a more combat-specific role for women is likely not their physical or mental make-up, but rather the current social issues and cultural climate of the military and the United States in general (Pinch 2004, 8).

Combat effectiveness is likely enhanced by an additional capability or point of view that a female CI/HUMINT marine could bring to the fight. Combat leaders recognize this additional capability and insight, and they welcome yet another tool to accomplish a very complicated mission when operating in a counter-insurgency environment. This attitude is born from experience and the ability to understand the contemporary operating environment and many of the nuances that must be addressed if Marine Corps units are going to be successful in the conduct of their operations.

New technologies, to include modifications to current systems such as Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV), continue to flood the battlefield in an effort to increase the level of combat effectiveness of units operating in the global war on terrorism. Personal equipment is also being improved so that individual marines can operate with maximum safety. As the Marine Corps continues to remain a force in readiness, it must look to



employ all of its resources as effectively as possible. Perhaps women in the CI/HUMINT community are no different.

Leaders also recognize the possible impacts on unit cohesion. This is likely the biggest hurdle to overcome, at least in the context of employing a HET comprised of one or more females. Appropriate education and leadership will definitely be required to overcome individual perceptions that may lead to a decrease in unit cohesion or combat effectiveness (Pinch 2004, 9). The common background of recruit training for enlisted marines or Officer Candidates School (OCS) for officer marines can form a solid foundation for marines to build upon. The effects of including women in a male-dominated environment are hard to predict. However, their performance in supporting roles, and in some instances, directly involved with their combat-trained male counterparts, has been noteworthy. While it remains to be seen, should a policy including women in the CI/HUMINT community be implemented, the effect it will have on combat effectiveness or cohesion of a unit, based on recent performances of women in harms way indicates a positive result.

Combat units remain focused on achieving situational understanding of their assigned area of responsibility and thus are willing to employ any and all resources available to achieve mission accomplishment. Units or individuals attached, but not assigned, to combat units provide a capability requested or required by the operating unit to enhance its combat effectiveness and its likelihood of mission accomplishment. The counter-insurgency environment in Iraq requires quality intelligence collection, which is largely human intelligence (HUMINT), to be successful. As discussed in chapters three

and four, combat leaders have acknowledged note the possible reward of having a female perspective.

The Commandant of the Marine Corps recently issued an edict to the service to institute a policy referred to as “Every Marine into the Fight”, ALMAR 002/07. This new policy specifically states that the Commandant wants all marines to be afforded the opportunity to deploy to a combat zone. This is an example of a “one team, one fight” analogy readily used in our society; the military, sports, and the corporate world use the same phrase.



Figure 7. Commanding General's Letter to Marines

Source: Created by author. 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division Commanding General's letter to the marines of 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division. Photograph taken by researcher while touring the National Museum of the Marine Corps, Quantico, VA, 2008.

Over the previous few years people have seen our U.S. servicewomen die in combat. The fact that there has been no public outcry specific to those incidents may be a further indicator of indifference or tolerance regarding the role of women in a combat environment (Solaro 2006, 26). Additionally, a recent recruiting initiative aimed solely

at women and depicting women in positions of empowerment and leadership with a message that states: “There are no female marines. Only marines.” (Quenqua 2008). Niche recruiting, such as that of physically fit and mentally tough women, could be a stepping-stone to including capable females into the CI/HUMINT community. As Franklin Pinch explained:

Quite simply, diversity is all about people and their differences, whether these differences are real or imagined. Leaders need to recognize that there is a natural human tendency to categorize people in a way that helps us to make sense out of our world. We assign the people we meet to the category, or categories, they most resemble. These groupings may be extremely broad (e.g., Canadian versus American), or based upon aspects like race, religion, or gender. We further complicate things in the military by adding many additional categories (e.g., Army/Navy/Air Force; operational/support). The categories we use come with a set of assumptions and attitudes about the people within a given group. These attitudes influence how we think about the people in a group, how we feel about them, and how we are likely to behave in their presence. Leaders who understand this principle will be able to anticipate how followers will react in the presence of other groups and be able to use this as an advantage when necessary (Pinch 2004, V).

### Recommendations

There appears to be an identified need for greater female involvement in the human intelligence collection efforts of marine combat units. Combat experience and professionalism play a role in arriving at that conclusion, and with that comes the

understanding that this sort of cultural change may come with some negative influences on combat effectiveness or unit cohesion. However, those leaders and professionals that express a willingness to explore a yet untapped resource understand the contemporary operational environment they face in conducting counter-insurgency or stability operations.

The research has only focused on one aspect of the issue and that is one of determining capability demand. There is a large demand for CI/HUMINT capability on the battlefields of Iraq. Combat leaders have had success when they are able to employ women in intelligence collection and leaders should continue to search for ways to further exploit such a capability.

The most significant issue, at least for the near term, is that of cultural change or transition. As long as the Marine Corps' most important task remains to fight and win our nation's wars, its combat units and associated leadership will need to be equipped with every possible resource or capability to be best prepared to accomplish any assigned mission.

Therefore, the following recommendations apply:

1. Women must continue to support ground combat operations in such a manner that currently exists in the global war on terror. The Lioness Program, as it currently exists in Al Anbar Province, Iraq supports basic force protection efforts and can assist in walk-in HUMINT source development.

2. When available, women who are attached to a combat unit be made available to support HET operations and interrogations. Doing so, affords professionally trained CI/HUMINT marines the opportunity to provide on-the-job training to those women

supporting source operations, HUMINT collection initiatives, and tactical interrogations to fully exploit situations for intelligence potential.

3. Continue further research and exploration into the inclusion of women in the Marine Corps CI/HUMINT community as a permanently assigned military occupational specialty. United States Army THTs could serve as a baseline example of how to implement, train, and employ women in a CI/HUMINT capacity.

### Additional Study

There are several issues or items that need to be explored in greater detail. The focus of the research was not to determine whether or not to include women in combat roles, such as the infantry or artillery. Based upon the current operating environment and its many nuances, and desire to utilize female-supported human intelligence collection exists. As a result, additional study needs to focus on the feasibility of incorporating a Marine Corps policy that incorporates women into its CI/HUMINT community. Subordinate issues to that discussion would likely include possible required changes to CI/HUMINT training. The evaluation of physical fitness standards necessary to lead or support human intelligence collection operations, as well as overarching issues, impacts, or concerns within the Marine Corps intelligence community should such a change to the current Marine Corps policy be implemented must also be analyzed.

APPENDIX A  
CI/HUMINT SURVEY

Women in the United States Marine Corps CI/HUMINT Community.

What is your MOS? Combat Arms or Combat Support/Combat Service Support

1. Do you have any experience working with (directly or indirectly) a Marine Corps HUMINT Exploitation Team (HET)?
  
2. Do you have any experience working with the MNF-W Lioness Program?
  
3. As a commander, would you have any reservations about employing a CI/HUMINT team (HET), either led or comprised of women, in a combat environment?
  
4. How might you assess the overall impact to unit cohesion if your unit was assigned a HET comprised of one or more females? Negatively/Minimally/Positively?
  
5. How might you assess the overall impact to combat effectiveness if your unit was assigned a HET comprised of one or more females?  
Negatively/Minimally/Positively?

6. Any additional comments or insights on the topic? Expand on personal experiences if desired.



## APPENDIX B

### DEFINITIONS

Combat Effectiveness is defined as the ability of a unit to perform its mission. Factors such as ammunition, personnel, status of fuel, and weapon systems are assessed and rated.

Combat Formation is defined as an ordered arrangement of forces for a specific purpose and the general configuration of a unit on the ground.

Combat Intelligence is defined as the knowledge of the enemy, weather, and geographical features required by a commander in the planning and conduct of combat operations.

Combat Outpost is defined as a reinforced observation post capable of conducting limited combat operations. A security force established at the regimental level during defensive or stationary operations.

Unit Cohesion is defined as when unit members are dependent on each other for the completion of their mission or survival. Additionally, unit members are expected to meet all standards of performance and behavior.

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